

salutary influence over the noxious vapours by which the plague is generated. No part of Europe can show such gigantic Planes as those in the neighbourhood of Constantinople. They may be esteemed next to the Cedars of Lebanon in dignity and durability. The precise age that the Plane tree will attain, has never been exactly ascertained; but if we accept the testimony of Pausanias, who lived in the middle of the second century, we shall scarcely assign it a shorter period of duration than the Oak; for he tells us of one in Arcadia of extraordinary size and beauty, supposed to have been planted by Menelaus, the husband of the beautiful Helen, about thirteen hundred years before the period when he describes it as being in so much luxuriance and vigour. There are two species of this tree, the Oriental, and the Occidental: they both love the water, particularly the Occidental, which thrives rapidly by the side of a stream; and the size which they attain in those soils where they flourish best, introduces them to a still closer acquaintance with the element they are so fond of, by rendering their trunks fit for vessels and canoes, to which purpose they are frequently applied.

The Plane Tree at Lee Court, near Blackheath, is a beautiful specimen of the Oriental kind. It waves its slender branches and light clustering leaves over the stream of a small rivulet, tempting the angler to seek its cooling shade; whilst within a few yards' distance, on the opposite bank, stands the ancient residence of the family of Bohun, thus described in the journal of Evelyn. "Went to visit our good neighbour Mr. Bohun, whose whole house is a cabinet of all elegancies, especially Indian; in the hall are contrivances of Japan screens instead of wainscot, and there is an excellent pendule clock, enclosed in the curious flower-work of Mr. Gibbons, in the middle of the vestibule. The landships of the screens represent the manner of living, and country of the Chinese. But above all, his lady's cabinet is adorned on the fret, ceiling, and chimney-piece, with Mr. Gibbons' best carving. There are also some of Streeter's best paintings, and many curiosities of gold and silver, as growing in the mines. The gardens are exactly kept, and the whole place very agreeable and well watered." The tree itself is mentioned in a subsequent passage. "Sept. 16, 1683. At the elegant villa and garden of Mr. Bohun's at Lee. He shewed me the Zinnar tree, or Platanus, and told me that since they had planted this kind of tree about the city of Ispahan in Persia, the plague, which formerly much infested the place, had exceedingly abated of its mortal effects, and rendered it very healthy." Evelyn's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 525. Lee Court remains at present much in the state in which it was during Evelyn's time; and the idea of this Plane tree having been examined by him with curiosity and interest, as one of the earliest introduced into this country, is sufficient to give it value in the eyes of all who are acquainted with his admirable genius and virtues, independent of the attraction which it may boast in its own beauty.—The circumference of this tree at six feet from the ground is fourteen feet eight inches; it rises to the height of about sixty-five feet, and contains three hundred and one feet of timber.

PLATE XXXII.—THE CRAWLEY ELM.

This aged tree stands in the village of Crawley, on the high road from London to Brighton. It is a well-known object to all who are in the habit of travelling that way, and arrests the eye of the stranger at once by its tall and straight stem, which ascends to the height of seventy feet, and by the fantastic ruggedness of its wilkly-spreading roots. Its trunk is perforated to the very top, measuring sixty-one feet in circumference at the ground, and thirty-five feet round the inside, at two feet from the base.

In former ages it would have constituted a fit retreat for a Druid, whence he might have dispensed his sacred oracles; or in latter times for a hermit, who might have sat within the hollow stem with

"His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,"

and gazed on the stars as they passed over his head, without his reflections being disturbed by the intervention of a single outward object: but to the benevolent mind it gives rise to more pleasing ideas in its present state; lifting its tranquil head over humble roofs, which it has sheltered from their foundation, and affording, in the projections and points around its base, an inexhaustible source of pleasure to the train of village children who cluster like bees around it, trying their infant strength and courage in climbing its mimic precipices; whilst their parents recall, in their pastimes, the feelings of their own childhood, when, like them, they disported under the same boughs. It is such associations as these that render a well-known and favourite tree an object that no art can imitate, no substitute replace. It seems to live with us, and for us; and he who can wantonly destroy the source of so much innocent, and indeed exalted gratification, appears to commit an injury against a friend